

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00
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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13
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O R 211715Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1668
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RABAT 2183

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR MO XA UR
SUBJECT: KING HASSAN'S APRIL 18 PRESS INTERVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: IN AN APRIL 18 TELEVISED INTERVIEW
WITH FOUR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FRENCH PRESS, KING HASSAN
MADE HIS FIRST PUBLIC COMMENTARY SINCE MOROCCO'S DECISION TO
SEND TROOPS TO ZAIRE. HE FOCUSED ON HIS REASONS FOR SENDING
TROOPS, GAVE HIS VIEWS ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS, AND DISCUSSED
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ROLES OF THE SOVIET UNION, LIBYA, FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES.
THE INTERVIEW WAS ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTHY IN THAT IT BROUGHT
INTO THE PUBLIC'S EYE FOR THE FIRST TIME MANY OF THE VIEWS
WHICH HE HAS EXPRESSED PREVIOUSLY ONLY IN PRIVATE. OF
PARTICULAR INTEREST WERE HIS ACCUSATION OF SOVIET/LIBYAN/CUBAN
CONNIVANCE AND THEIR "GRAND PLAN" TO SUBVERT AFRICA, AND HIS
CLAIMS OF "PROOF" OF CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA.

WHILE HE TEMPERED HIS REMARKS WITH CONCILIATORY STATEMENTS TOWARD THE USSR, THE BOTTOM LINE WAS TO THROW DOWN THE GAUNTLET PUBLICLY BEFORE THE ENCROACHMENT OF MARXISM/LENINISM IN AFRICA. HIS ATTACK ON LIBYA, WITH WHICH GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OF LATE HAVE BEEN SLIGHTLY BETTER, WAS ALSO UNPRECEDENTED.

2. THE US DID NOT ESCAPE A JAB OR TWO. ALTHOUGH EXPRESSING UNDERSTANDING FOR US NON-INTERVENTION ON THE GROUND, HASSAN SEEMED TO URGE A MORE ACTIVIST US DIPLOMATIC AND AID POSTURE. THE KING ALSO ZEROED IN ON AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S COMMENT ON CUBANS. HIS COMMENTARY ON FRANCE WAS PARTICULARLY WARM AND UNDERLINED THE DEPTH OF BILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE ZAIRE OPERATION AND IN AFRICA IN GENERAL. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, THE KING WAS OPTIMISTIC, FAVORING AN EARLY PEACE AND COHABITATION WITH ISRAEL. END SUMMARY.

3. THE FOLLOWING ARE PARAPHRASED HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRESS CONFERENCE, BROKEN DOWN BY PRINCIPAL SUBJECTS. ECONOMIC TOPICS BEING REPORTED SEPTEL.

4. ZAIRE: MOROCCO DECIDED TO INTERVENE BECAUSE ZAIRE IS A MEMBER OF OAU AND REQUESTED MOROCCAN ASSISTANCE TO DEFEND ITS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. IN ADDITION, ZAIRE IS ONE OF THE LARGEST COUNTRIES IN AFRICA. IT HAS A COMMON FRONTIER WITH SUDAN WHICH IN TURN IS LOCATED ON THE RED SEA, IS ON THE SOUTHERN FLANK OF EGYPT, AND IS ONLY 30 KILOMETERS FROM SAUDI ARABIA. THUS IN A SENSE MOROCCO

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IS SAFEGUARDING "ARAB SOLIDARITY," ESPECIALLY THOSE NATIONS WHICH ARE THE CORNERSTONE OF PEACE EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

5. MOROCCO IS COMBATTING MARXISM/LENINISM IN AFRICA. A PRISONER RECENTLY CAPTURED IN SHABA HAS REVEALED THE "PRESENCE" OF "WHITE ANGOLANS" AND CUBANS. THIS PRISONER HAS FURNISHED "PROOF" OF THE PRESENCE OF CUBANS IN SUPPLY, DELIVERY OF ARMS, AND ADVISING AND TRAINING OF THE MERCENARIES.

6. IF MOROCCO FAILED, MANY LIVES WOULD BE LOST, BUT IF IT WON, ALL OF AFRICA WILL HAVE WON. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY INTERNAL MOROCCAN RESISTANCE TO SENDING THE TROOPS, AS 1200 VOLUNTEERS WERE CHOSEN TO GO. MOROCCO WILL CONTINUE AS LONG AS IT CAN, BUT IF THE AFFAIR GOES ON IT WILL MEAN THAT THINGS HAVE ASSUMED A NEW DIMENSION; MOROCCO CANNOT EXPECT TO SAVE AFRICA BY ITSELF. BEGIN COMMENT: THE KING'S REMARKS ON THIS SUBJECT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DESIGNED IN PART TO DEAL WITH CRITICISM ON THE INTERVENTION EMANATING PUBLICLY FROM SOME ARAB NATIONS AND STILL PRIVATELY

FROM MAJOR MOROCCAN OPPOSITION PARTIES. END SOMMENT.

7. VIEWS ON AFRICA: NONE OF "MOROCCO'S AFRICAN FRIENDS" WERE CONSULTED ON THE INTERVENTION, SO AS NOT TO EMBARRASS THEM. NEITHER HAD ANY MASSIVE RESPONSE OF SOLIDARITY FROM AFRICANS BEEN ANTICIPATED. THE ACTION WAS TAKEN ON THE PREMISE THAT MOROCCO MIGHT BE THE ONLY COUNTRY TO SEND SOLDIERS. THE AIM WAS TO SET AN EXAMPLE, AN INCITEMENT TO AWAKEN A CERTAIN NUMBER OF SANE, REASONABLE AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHICH CONSTITUTE THE MAJORITY OF AFRICA, ALBEIT A SILENT, TIMID MAJORITY. THE OAU, INCLUDING ITS SECRETARY GENERAL AND STAFF, IS CURRENTLY IN THE HANDS OF "AGITATORS." THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE IN THE VIABILITY OF A MEDITERRANEAN POLICY ANY MORE THAN THERE IS TO BELIEVE IN THE OAU. EUROPE, FOR EXAMPLE, IS DIVIDED IN TWO CAMPS, BETWEEN SOCIALISTS AND NON-SOCIALISTS. AFRICA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 RABAT 2183

WILL NEVER BEUNITED AS LONG AS IT INSISTS ONGROUPING THOSE
INCAPABLE OF BEING GROUPED. ONE SHOULD NO LONGER
THINK IN TERMS OF REGIONAL GROUPS BASED ON "APPARENT
POLITICAL-ECONOMIC-SOCIAL GROUNDS." IT MIGHT BE
POSSIBLE FOR A CERTAIN NUMBER OF AFRICANS TO UNITE, AS THE
WISE COUNTRIES ARE MORE NUMEROUS THAN THE CRAZY ONES.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE WISE COUNTRIES REMAIN SILENT.
SILENCE IN THIS CASE IS NOT GOLDEN. ONE MUST ACT.
BEGIN COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MOROCCAN DISILLUSIONMENT
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WITH THE OAU IS WELL KNOWN, THE KING ONLY BARELY STOPPED
SHORT OF CALLING FOR A NEW ORGANIZATION TO REPLACE IT.
THIS ASPECT MAY BEAR WATCHING IN COMING WEEKS, MOST IMMEDIATELY AT
THE ONGOING FRANCOPHONE SUMMIT IN DAKAR (SEE BELOW). END COMMENT.

8. SOVIET ROLE: THERE IS NO CONCRETE PROOF THAT THE SOVIETS
ARE BEHIND THE MERCENARIES BUT THEY THEMSELVES CLAIM TO BE
MARXIST-LENINISTS. THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH THE SOVIET NOTE
TO THE GOM ON ZAIRE WAS THAT IT POSED PROBLEMS OF "LOGIC,"
SINCE THE SOVIETS SUPPORTED OPERATIONS AGAINST THE SAME
KATANGESE IN 1963. THE NOTE WAS ANSWERED IN A "CORRECT"
TONE, FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE EXEMPLARY AND COOPERATION
PERFECT. EVEN NOW DISCUSSIONS ARE UNDERWAY TO EXPAND
RELATIONS. WE ARE NOT ALWAYS IN AGREEMENT, PARTICULARLY
ON IDOLOGY. IF ONE DAY MOROCCO WERE TO ALIGN ITSELF
WITH THE USSR, IT WOULD HAVE TO CHANGE ITS NAME TO THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SOMETHING. AS LONG AS THERE IS A
KING IN MOROCCO, THERE WILL BE NO IDEOLOGICAL AGREEMENT WITH THE
USSR. NEVERTHELESS, THE TWO CAN COHABIT PERFECTLY WELL.

9. THE USSR AND CUBA CANNOT ESCALATE THEIR ASSISTANCE TO
THE INVADERS WITHOUT EVOKING AN AFRICAN REACTION AND WE DO
NOT BELIEVE THEY WOULD BE SO UNWISE AS TO DO THAT FOR
AFRICANS WOULD SURELY GO BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

10. AS TO SOVIET STRATEGY, IF I WERE RUSSIAN I WOULD
PURSUE THE DOCTRINES OF PETER THE GREAT AND LENIN. THE
FORMER SOUGHT WARM WATER PORTS. THE LATTER PROPOSED
INFILTRATING EUROPE VIA ITALY, AT THE SAME TIME STRANGLING
OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES BY SURROUNDING THEM WITH "AGGRESSIVE
REGIMES," THUS EVENTUALLY RENDERING EUROPE UNLIVABLE. ALTHOUGH
THIS IS ALL SUPPOSITION, IT SEEMS TO BE WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW.

11. COMMENT: THE KING'S ALLUSION TO ONGOING DISCUSSIONS
PROBABLY RELATES TO THE MESKALA PHOSPHATE PROJECT, EXCHANGES ON
WHICH, AS WE ARE REPORTING SEPARATELY, HAVE APPARENTLY RESUMED.
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END COMMENT.

12. LIBYA: YOU SEE HERE ON THE MAP LIBYA AND ALGERIA (SHOWS MAP). WITHIN EIGHT DAY'S INTERVAL NOUAKCHOTT AND KHARTOUM WERE ATTACKED. THE OBJECTIVE OF THESE ATTACKS WAS TO SEIZE MAURITANIA IN ORDER TO REACH MOROCCO, LIKEWISE TO SEIZE SUDAN TO REACH EGYPT. THIS WAS PART OF A GRAND PLAN.

13. THERE ARE 7,000 SOVIETS IN LIBYA, MORE THAN 800 TANKS (INCLUDING SOME T-72'S ARMED WITH LASERS), 15 SUBMARINES, AND 100 AIRCRAFT WHICH THE LIBYANS WILL NOT BE READY TO FLY FOR 25 YEARS. THEY ARE IN THE PROCESS OF BUILDING A LOGISTICAL BASE, FOR WHOSE ADVANTAGE WE ARE NOT SURE.

14. FRANCE: THE TIMING FOR THIS PRESS CONFERENCE WAS SPECIFICALLY CHOSEN SO AS TO TAKE PLACE ON THE EVE OF THE FRANCO-AFRICAN SUMMIT. IN GISCARD'S LAST PRESS CONFERENCE HE EXPOSED A POLICY WHICH CONFORMS PERFECTLY WITH OUR POLICY IN AFRICA. IT ALSO COINCIDES WITH THE SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK OF COORDINATION AND CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

15. AGREEMENT WAS REACHED WITH GISCARD TO UNDERTAKE A COMMON ACTION WITH REGARD TO ZAIRE. FOR VARIOUS REASONS FRANCE WAS THE ONLY COUNTRY IN EUROPE WHICH COULD LEAD THE WAY, ALTHOUGH THE OTHERS WILL EVENTUALLY FOLLOW.

16. THE UNITED STATES: IN VIEW OF THE US'S EXPERIENCES SINCE WW II, IT IS PERFECTLY UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THE US HAS HAD ENOUGH OF OVERSEAS MILITARY INTERVENTIONS. THE US CANNOT BE CRITICIZED FOR NOT HAVING INTERVENED DIRECTLY IN THE CONFLICT AS THAT POLICY RELATES TO ITS DOMESTIC CONCERNS. INDEED IF AMERICA WERE TO INTERVENE DIRECTLY THAT WOULD GIVE THE CONFLICT A VERY DANGEROUS DIMENSION. THE ONLY THING MOROCCO ASKS IS THAT THE US GIVE MATERIAL AND MORAL AID TO THOSE WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR AN IDEA WHICH IS CLOSE TO ITS OWN IDEALS. MORAL ASSISTANCE COULD

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TAKE ON CERTAIN PRESSURES AGAINST THE ANTAGONISTS AND PROTAGONISTS. MATERIAL AID COULD ENABLE THE ZAIRIANS TO HAVE THE MEANS TO DEFEND THEIR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY.

17. THE US REACTION ON ZAIRE WAS SOMEWHAT CONTRADICTORY. MR. YOUNG CONSIDERED THAT THE CUBANS IN ANGOLA WERE AN ELEMENT OF STABILIZATION, WHICH SEEMED QUESTIONABLE. ON THE OTHER HAND, UNDER SECRETARY HABIB JUST TOLD US THAT MR. YOUNG SPOKE

FOR HIMSELF, AND THAT US POLICY IS SOMETHING ELSE. BEGIN COMMENT.
SOME OF THE KING'S JABS MAYHAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO BALANCE THE
ANTI-SOVIET TENOR OF HIS REMARKS, ALTHOUGH THE KING -- AND OTHER
MOROCCANS --
ARE OBVIOUSLY STILL BOTHERED BOTH BY US PUBLIC RETICENCE ON
ZAIRE AND CONFLICTING STATEMENTS FROM HIGH US OFFICIALS
ON AFRICA POLICY. END SOMMENT.

18. THE SAHARA CONNECTION: MOROCCO COULD SEND EVEN MORE
TROOPOS IF NECESSARY WITHOUT WEAKENING ITS RESERVES,
PRESENT TROOP DISPOSITIONS, OR THE DEFENSE OF MOROCCO.

19. MIDDLE EAST: PEACE HAS NEVER BEEN CLOSER THAN IT IS NOW IN
TERMS OF INTELLECTUAL ATTITUDES. PRESENT ARAB LEADERS ARE
RESPONSIBLE AND HIGHLY EDUCATED AND CONVINCED THAT THE CURRENT
SITUATION CANNOT CONTINUE. THE MYTH OF THROWING ISRAEL INTO THE
SEA HAS HARMED US A GREAT DEAL. WITH THE RESOURCES AND TALENT OF
THE REGION PLUS THE CREATIVE GENIUS OF ISRAEL AND ISRAEL'S FRIENDS
IN THE WORLD, THE REGION COULD BECOME THE GREATEST ECONOMIC POWER
IN THE WORLD.

20. FULL FRENCH LANGUAGE TEXT AS RELEASED BY OFFICIAL MAROC AGENCE
PRESSE AND PUBLISHED IN PRESS HAS BEEN AIRPOUCHED TO NEA/AFN
AND INR/RNA/NE.
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